

Below are the numerical results from the Questionnaire recently sent to all AMC attorneys. I've simply reproduced the questionnaire with the number of responses shown for each value (1 through 5) at each question. The number of responses is in parentheses behind each value. The average value given each question is shown in brackets following the question.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AMC ATTORNEYS

This survey is intended to gauge AMC attorney opinions and experience regarding client relations in the changing work environment.

Below are a series of statements followed by a set of numbers, 1 through 5. Please assign a number to each statement by circling the number after the statement you deem most appropriate. The numbers have the following meanings:

- 1 Agree strongly**
- 2 Agree
- 3 Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 Disagree
- 5 Disagree strongly

1. Legal Office personnel are more immune than others from the effects of budget cuts. **[3.870]**
1(0) 2(26) 3(41) 4(75) 5(66)
2. It is necessary for me to market my services. **[2.034]**
1(67) 2(93) 3(26) 4(12) 5(8)
3. Lawyers must be able to convincingly explain why clients should spend their own funds to pay for lawyers. **[2.100]**
1(59) 2(96) 3(32) 4(18) 5(4)
4. There is a strong nexus between the perceived value of lawyers and the funding for lawyer slots. **[2.000]**
1(71) 2(84) 3(31) 4(17) 5(2)
5. Our Legal Office competes not only with potential outside contractors for legal work, but also competes with other legal groups within DoD. **[2.970]**
1(21) 2(60) 3(48) 4(52) 5(22)
6. Our Legal Office competes for funds and slots with other activities, such as, for example, R&D, logistics and acquisition. **[1.990]**
1(69) 2(93) 3(34) 4(9) 5(5)
7. The Legal Office should allot more of its available person-hours to things like: giving seminars to individual groups of clients, giving presentations in the auditorium and publishing advice on electronic mail media. **[2.584]**
1(26) 2(95) 3(41) 4(39) 5(7)
8. Lawyers are qualified to contribute common-sense, non-legal inputs to planning or problem solving processes. **[1.474]**
1(139) 2(52) 3(10) 4(5) 5(3)

9. Knowing more about other functional areas (such as, for example, DOIM, logistics, counterintelligence, finance and accounting, personnel management and quality control) will help me be a more valuable lawyer. **[1.517]**
1(119) 2(77) 3(9) 4(3) 5(1)
10. It is beneficial to attend meetings of organizations other than Legal even if no legal issues are on the agenda. **[2.093]**
1(52) 2(107) 3(26) 4(12) 5(7)
11. Learning about the law outside my specialty will help me do a better job for my clients. **[1.782]**
1(77) 2(104) 3(19) 4(5) 5(1)
12. It is productive to allocate time to scan the environment of my command, installation or activity to seek new issues for lawyers to address. **[2.171]**
1(51) 2(97) 3(35) 4(15) 5(7)
13. I should set aside a portion of my limited time simply to get to better know my customers, their business and their problems. **[1.684]**
1(99) 2(86) 3(13) 4(3) 5(5)
14. Lawyers need leadership skills even if they are not supervisors. **[1.541]**
1(117) 2(76) 3(12) 4(3) 5(1)
15. TQM (Total Quality Management) involves getting continual feedback on processes in which one partakes is as to constantly improve them. TQM works if done properly. **[2.422]**
1(33) 2(90) 3(56) 4(12) 5(13)
16. Working in teams of lawyers can be the most effective way to achieve long term superior performance. **[2.467]**
1(40) 2(74) 3(64) 4(22) 5(10)
17. Using teams whose members are from varied functional areas can be the best way to achieve long term superior performance. **[2.130]**
1(53) 2(95) 3(42) 4(13) 5(4)
18. The new, changing work environment requires more interpersonal cooperation and personal leadership skills than the work environment of the past. **[1.952]**
1(73) 2(87) 3(39) 4(9) 5(2)
19. I am comfortable in leading a group through a complex project. **[1.782]**
1(82) 2(104) 3(13) 4(7) 5(3)
20. I am comfortable working in a group where there is no formal leader, the group sets its own goals and the group decides how to do the work. **[2.276]**
1(50) 2(95) 3(27) 4(33) 5(5)
21. I have the appropriate training to lead others in a project where team formation phenomena are key elements. **[2.357]**
1(48) 2(81) 3(39) 4(34) 5(5)
22. I would benefit from training that sensitizes me more fully to the communication and cognitive styles of those I deal with. **[2.268]**
1(47) 2(89) 3(40) 4(25) 5(4)
23. Other lawyers at my command, installation or activity would benefit from training that sensitizes them more fully to the communication and cognitive styles of those they deal with. **[2.176]**
1(52) 2(94) 3(43) 4(17) 5(4)

24. Change in the work place occurs too fast and should be slowed to a more reasonable pace. [3.121]
1(19) 2(33) 3(74) 4(64) 5(16)
25. Change in the work place is a significant stress factor. [2.129]
1(51) 2(106) 3(30) 4(18) 5(4)
26. Stress management training would help me do my job. [2.750]
1(23) 2(69) 3(68) 4(33) 5(15)
27. One should not be asked to actively create and manage change; just keeping up with change is difficult enough. [3.800]
1(5) 2(12) 3(53) 4(84) 5(51)
28. I have the skills and training to make formal presentations at high level meetings. [2.063]
1(69) 2(86) 3(28) 4(18) 5(6)
29. I have the training needed to make charts and slides needed for formal presentations or needed as exhibits to written communications. [3.167]
1(32) 2(49) 3(24) 4(62) 5(43)

Analysis of Questionnaire for All AMC Attorneys

I. Summary - Main Points of the Analysis

This paper analyzes the results from the Questionnaire for All AMC Attorneys. It discusses the numerical scores for questionnaire responses and discusses some of the comments submitted on the questionnaire. Below are listed the main points of the analysis.

1. Some credible criticism is made of the questionnaire's technique. But with care, conclusions can be drawn from the questionnaire.
2. Selectively working on multidisciplinary teams is a viable way to for lawyers to gain non legal expertise and to become better at rendering practical advice.
3. Lawyers realize the need to market services to the extent that education in this area need not be a top priority. Some AMC attorneys may see a conflict between needing to gain customer appreciation and the need sometimes to render unpopular opinions.
4. Due to the time and money needed for effective team dynamics training, and given AMC lawyers' willingness and confidence re teaming, training in team dynamics is not a top priority.
5. A significant number AMC lawyers feel they or their colleagues will benefit from training in sensitivity to cognitive and communication styles of others. This may show where training is both desired and useful for most AMC lawyers.
6. There are AMC attorneys who believe Legal Office personnel are more immune from the effects of budget cuts than others.
7. AMC attorneys are, at least to some extent, leery about Command initiatives such as TQM, reinvention, and the Professional Development Plan. Thus the benefits of the Plan must be real, substantial and quite visible if we expect AMC attorneys to endorse it.

II. Quality of the Questionnaire

As a preliminary matter, there are comments made by respondents questioning the quality of the questionnaire. For convenience these comments are reproduced below.

I have a Bachelor of Science in Psychology with honors, with distinction and I attended classes about proper testing and survey methods. In my opinion, this questionnaire obviously favored lawyers marketing their services, and learning other functional areas/ other legal specialties/ leadership/ communication/ teaming/ TQM presentation skills.

Please make the questionnaire more neutral next time, so the questionnaire will provide a valid measurement of AMC Attorneys' opinions.

Did you consult with someone trained in formulating survey questions? I perceive the questions as leading to a desired response. Only questions 1, 24 and 27 are written so as to produce a "negative" response. Aside from these three obvious attempts to "balance" the survey, the correct "policy" response is also obvious.

This appears to be another useless exercise to pump up the image that AMC is out to help its "family" of employees. The poor response indicates that many others feel the same way.

Based on the tenor and wording of the questions, it seems that the designers of this survey have an agenda and are using the survey to justify their views and goals. Perhaps I'm wrong, but the questions are biased in one direction. The real problem I have is too much work, too many special projects to sell ourselves, and most importantly no competent support staff. At least in a private law firm you can get someone to send a fax or make a copy so that there is some time to do legal work.

Believe me, I know what the "right" answers are supposed to be.

Some of these are rhetorical questions. If you have followed the more recent thought modes and buzzwords about "teaming" and marketing your own program, then to some extent the answers are implied in the questions. My 12 years of experience here has been that nothing changes very much, if at all. (underlining added)

Are we sure this is confidential? Actually, most of the questions seem to have only one possible answer. Whether or not we have the time to implement that which we all know would be beneficial is an entirely different question. (underlining added)

The gist of the above comments is that the questionnaire is not neutral, it has an underlying agenda, and certain answers are expected. These comments are consistent with informal, "off the record" comments I've gotten verbally. Given also that the questionnaire was not authored by one trained for this, we should give some credence to the above comments. On the other hand, the respondents, being attorneys, were sophisticated and unlikely to be affected by patterns or tendencies in the questions. In any event, we should take care in drawing conclusions from the questionnaire's numerical responses. Too, if we do another questionnaire in the future, we might consider getting outside expertise.

Despite the questionnaire's imperfections, we can glean some conclusions from it to help design a Professional Development Program for AMC Attorneys. One way to do this is to analyze written comments of the questionnaire's respondents; the comments are numerous and often form consistent patterns. Another way to glean conclusions from the questionnaire is to find consistencies and relations in the numerical responses. Below are the conclusions drawn from the numerical responses together with the rationale for the conclusions. Following that is an analysis of some of the written comments from the questionnaires.

III. Remarks on the Questionnaire's Numerical Responses.

A connection exists between the answers 9 and 13 of the questionnaire, in that both questions relate to a lawyers gaining knowledge outside their own functional area. The text of these questions is reproduced below for convenient reference.

9. Knowing more about other functional areas (such as, for example, DOIM , logistics, counterintelligence, finance and accounting, personnel management and quality control) will make me a more valuable lawyer.

13 . I should set aside a portion of my limited time simply to get to better know my customers, their business and their problems.

Question 9 had an average score of 1.517 and question 13 had an average score of 1.684, both scores showing a fairly strong agreement with the statements in the questions. It thus appears that AMC attorneys generally think that clients benefit if lawyers cross train in non legal areas, particularly in the clients' business areas. This observation seems to be bolstered by the response to question 10, which indicates AMC lawyers agree with the idea that they should attend meetings of organizations other than Legal even if no legal issues are on the agenda; attending such meetings is one way to learn the clients' business and expand non-legal expertise.

The responses to question 8 tie in with the remarks above on questions 9 and 13. The statement in question 8 was

8. Lawyers are qualified to contribute common-sense, non legal inputs to planning or problem solving processes.

Question 8 received an average score of 1.474, the majority of respondents strongly agreeing with its statement. The tie-in is this: The ability of AMC lawyers to give common sense advice would logically be enhanced by training or increased knowledge in non legal functional areas.

The responses to question 11 have relevance to the responses to questions 8, 9 and 13.

Question 11 is

11. Learning about the law outside my specialty will help me do a better job for my clients.

Question 11 received an average score of 1.782, indicating agreement with its statement. The commonality of question 11 with the questions above, and particularly with question 9, is that the concept that cross training enhances the quality of service to clients.

A nexus exists between questions 9 and 17. Question 9 states that knowing more about non legal functional areas makes one a better lawyer; question 17 states that teams whose members are from varied functional areas can be the best way to achieve long term superior performance. Working in multidisciplinary teams and learning in non legal functional areas go together, the logic being that doing one enhances in the other . Hence, a viable training tool may be to selectively get more lawyers on multifunctional teams so as to increase their non legal knowledge. One should say "selectively" since many comments on the survey relate to a lack of time to do all expected of lawyers. Thus time spent on multifunctional teams must either (1) be more useful than time spent elsewhere or (2) replace the present way of doing existing work.

Questions 1 through 6 have a common aspect; the idea that clients must understand how very valuable lawyers are if the lawyers are to compete successfully with non lawyers for slots. The questions and their average scores in parentheses are listed below.

1. Legal Office personnel are more immune than others from the effects of budget cuts. (3.870)
2. It is necessary for me to market my services . (2.034)
3. Lawyers must be able to convincingly explain why clients should spend their own funds to pay for lawyers. (2.100)
4. There is a strong nexus between the perceived value of lawyers the funding for lawyer slots. (2.00)
5. Our Legal Office competes not only with potential outside contractors for legal work, but also competes with other legal groups within DoD. (2.970)
6. Our Legal Office competes for funds with other activities, such as, for example, R&D, logistics and acquisition. (1.990)

The answers to questions 1 through 6 show general agreement that lawyers must insure that clients know the lawyers' value if lawyers are to compete for slots. (The question 5 score arguably does not fit the pattern here.) What import does this general agreement have for designing an AMC professional development plan for lawyers? As an answer, it is submitted that educating lawyers about the need to compete for slots is either unnecessary or not sufficiently useful to spend increasingly precious time on doing so.

Some comments from the questionnaire are relevant here. For example:

“The nexus between perceived value of lawyers and funding for our slots is disturbing. Our value does not lie in how many friends we make, if we are doing our job protecting the Command, the Army, the Government as a whole, we might not make any friends. We could be penalized ,through loss of slots, for doing our job”

“Even though the need for ‘marketing’ is crucial, we can not afford to lose sight of the fact that sometimes the ultimate in ‘customer service’ requires us to inform people that they may not do something in the way in which they originally conceived, i.e. saying no”

These comments may indicate a problem perceived by the questionnaire’s respondents: On the one hand, we want customers to appreciate us so we have customer support when we are looking for funds. But on the other hand, we must sometimes take an unpopular position (lose customer appreciation) if we are to our job properly. Perhaps this problem, which arguably is seen by the respondents, is why the average responses to questions 2 through 6 aren’t closer to 1 (strong agreement).

The answers to questions 18, 22 and 23 form a pattern. These questions and their average scores are listed below.

- 18. The new, changing work environment requires more interpersonal cooperation and personal leadership skills than the work environment of the past. (1.952)
- 19. I would benefit from training that sensitizes me more fully to the communication and cognitive styles of those I deal with. (2.268)
- 20. Other lawyers at my command , installation or facility would benefit from training that sensitizes them more fully to the communication and cognitive styles of those they deal with. (2.176)

Arguably, the number of people who answered “1” (agree strongly) or “ 2” (agree) is significant. For question 18, over three-fourths of the responses were a 1 or 2. For questions 22 and 23, nearly two-thirds of the responses were 1 or 2. The significance is that a large pool of AMC attorneys feel they or their colleagues will benefit from training in sensitivity to the cognitive and communication styles of others. This may show an area where training is desired and useful for a most AMC lawyers. Given the response to question 18, such training may be important in our changing work environment.

Questions 16, 17 and 19 through 21 relate to working in teams.

- 16. Working in teams of lawyers can be the most effective way to achieve long term superior performance. (2.467)
- 17. Using teams whose members are from varied functional areas can be the best way to achieve long term superior performance. (2.130)
- 19. I am comfortable leading a group through a complex project. (1.780)
- 20. I am comfortable working in a group where there is no formal leader, the group sets its own goals and the group decides how to do its own work. (2.276)
- 21. I have the appropriate training to lead others in a project where team formation phenomena are key elements. (2.357)

The respondents agreement with the statements in 17 and 19 and somewhat milder agreement with the statements in questions 16, 20 and 21 may show AMC lawyers acceptance of working in teams and confidence in their ability to do so. Generally, effective training in team dynamics is costly and time consuming, typically occurring as part of courses two to three months long. Given the time and money costs of effective team dynamics training, and given the relative acceptance of and confidence in teaming among AMC lawyers, training in team dynamics need not be a top priority .

Question 16, which concerns working in teams of lawyers, elicited a number of comments. These are listed below.

Most areas of legal work are not conducive to teamwork,

If you have an environment where work is internal to a large legal office - maybe. Usually a lawyer works most effectively in a team of non lawyers.

No. Results in inconsistent advice and “power plays” on the “team.”

I agree with the “working in teams” bit, but I think that lawyers working in cross functional teams is a better concept than “teams of lawyers.” More than one lawyer in a room can scare people.

These comments indicate that AMC lawyers may have more misgivings about working in teams of lawyers than about working in teams generally. This could help explain the difference in scores between questions 16 and 17.

The foregoing comments all relate to patterns among responses to two or more questions. There is one question, standing alone, where the minority views are deemed significant. That is question 1, which has the statement,

Legal Office Personnel are more immune than others from the effects of budget cuts.
26 of the questionnaire’s 210 responses agreed with the statement and 41 responses neither agreed nor disagreed. Though the responses are minority views, they worry the Professional Development Committee members who have fought to save at-risk attorney slots in RIFs. This experience teaches that losing attorney jobs is a real, ongoing danger to which no one is immune. The worry is that attorneys’ belief in any immunity heightens their risk of job loss.

IV. Remarks re Written Comments on the Questionnaire

There were quite a few written comments submitted by the questionnaire’s respondents. Some of the comments were considered. In view of this, and in view of the previously mentioned criticism of the questionnaire’s neutrality and wording, the written responses, when properly analyzed, may be more valuable than the numerical responses to the questionnaire.

Assembled below is a set of comments from the questionnaire which relate to TQM, the questionnaire itself, reorganization, and reinvention. These comments have a common element in that they show an attitude toward Government directed quality improvement initiatives and organizational restructuring programs. Any numbers preceding a comment indicate the question with which the respondent associated the comment.

15. I think TQM may work if done properly. But, too much that is being done in the name of TQM seems to be change for the sake of change. The stated goal of “constantly improving” processes sometimes appears to motivate process review teams to recommend change with[out] appreciating the reasons the current process exists or the potential effects of the change on other processes. There are times when we are doing the best we can with the resources available and are using a process that has developed from years of experience. In those cases, tinkering with the process usually makes the process worse.
(Bracketed word added.)

24. A constant complaint here is that we’re always reorganizing. We never seem to get into an efficient pattern. Keeping up with technology is different and desirable.

One should not be asked to reinvent while one is still being stepped on by higher HQ! **EITHER EMPOWER US OR DON’T .**

22. I am very impatient wit time-wasting “happy talk.”

24. The key to managing change is to only impose change that has a purpose. Change that is busyspeak, buzzword organizational power jockeying overloads individuals, produces cynicism. I don’t believe there is a limit to rate of change if people understand what is being changed, can endorse its objectives, and are empowered.

If any lawyer in AMC has time to tally surveys, send his/her slot to us!

15. Now, how would we know this if we’ve never seen TQM done properly?

15. TQM is a gimmick like so many other management buzz words – such as metrics.

15. Who knows? (Who cares?)

15. TQM, is in my opinion, a waste of time, energy and manpower with no discernible benefits. Trying to define/restructure processes in a non-manufacturing environment such as ours is a futile act.

Most of the above comments show a certain distrust or frustration with concepts like TQM, reinvention and initiative such as this questionnaire. This presents a challenge: the professional development program we create must not only have real and substantial benefits, but also we must convince a group of leery attorneys that the benefits are real and substantial. If the recipients of the program do not buy into it, how effective can the program be?

Many of the comments complain of a lack of time and the pressure of the work load. Few AMC attorneys would dispute that we have too few people and hours for all the work we are asked to do. Between one-third and one-half the comments about time were associated with question 7. That question relates to spending time on giving seminars or presentations for clients or publishing advice on electronic mail media. The comments specific to question 7 generally say there is no time for such activities or that such activities would be good to do if time permitted. One needs to view the response to question 7 (Average score of 2.548) in light of the written comments. Perhaps seminars, presentations and publications on electronic mail media are regarded by AMC attorneys as having less priority than other tasks.

“Good to do but not enough time” comments were made about activities other than those mentioned in question 7. These comments addressed activities such as learning about non legal functional areas (question 9), attending meetings of organizations other than Legal (question 10), actively seeking issues to address (question 12), getting to know one’s clients (question 13) and learning to make charts and graphs (question 29). Consequently, these activities, like those mentioned in question 7, may be regarded as having less priority than other tasks.

Assuming that we want to pursue activities such as those mentioned in questions 7, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 29, then we must do either or both of the following: make more efficient use of the time and personnel available or cut items from our work load to make time for such activities. The latter step especially would require real Command support.